



ZERO BEAT

Our 77th Year as an ARRL Affiliated Club

February 2025

Welcome New Members

Past new member's will be posted in the March issue.

Want to see your name here?

[Join HCRA Today!](#)

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From the editor:

As I edit this issue, February 2nd has passed; the groundhog has seen his shadow, which can only mean one thing... 6 more weeks of playing radio! ;-)

Please excuse the much smaller than normal Zero Beat content. With so many things going on at the same time, it's been difficult coming up with a good amount of content for this issue. The issue content will increase in the future.

I do have many new members (thanks to Steve, N1SR), which will be posted in the March issue to get caught up on welcoming all new/returning members to our club in Zero Beat since September of 2024. I simply ran out of time.

There is some great content within this issue, beginning with Skywarn Reporting by Smitty, KC1IKA, plus we have the usual "From the Presidents Desk," which features some really great thoughts by Alan, AB1XW.

It's February, which means it's the start of Hamfest season! As always, the 36th annual MTARA Hamfest kicks off the season with several other Hamfests and ham radio flea markets advertised in this issue so you can catch some deals.

More information related to upcoming license upgrade classes, including how to become a VE (volunteer examiner). I was a VE in the 1990s-2000s, and I'll be recertifying again as time permits. There is nothing more rewarding than being a VE!

Thanks to everyone who submitted articles to Alan's Zero Beat, and I hope you will continue to submit articles and for-sale items to me in the future. One last comment: never did I realize what I was in for moving after 43 years in one home!

73, Ken - KD1KU

February 7th Meeting

Do those hills or mountains near your QTH affect your HF signal? Learn about everything you can do to resolve or minimize the effect they can have on your signal. One of HCRA's newer members, Ken Miller, WB1DX, will be giving this in-person presentation all about terrain analysis for DX'ing. This is sure to be an interesting talk. Whatever you do, don't miss this meeting!

Doors open at 7 pm for coffee, donuts, and some rag chewing. Regular club meetings are held at the Holyoke Medical Auxiliary Conference Center, 575 Beech Street, Holyoke, MA 01040.

Need directions? <http://www.hcra.org/meeting-location/>

Upcoming Club Meetings and Guest Speakers



2025

As the chill of winter grips our area, Nick Maslon, K1NZ, will tell us about his adventures when he joined a DXpedition to the South Pacific nation of Vanuatu. Hear everything about palm trees, cool breezes, coconuts, and pileups.



2025

Do those hills near your house affect your HF signal? Learn all about everything that you can do to improve it. HCRA's very own member, Ken Miller, WB1DX, will be telling us all about terrain analysis for DX'ing. Don't miss it!



2025

Have you ever bounced signals off the moon? Would you like to learn how? Bill Larned, KA1WHT, will be telling us how even relatively small stations can be easily set up to tackle Earth-Moon-Earth (EME) communications.



2025

April is our "Show and Tell" meeting. Bring whatever radio-related project you've been working on, show it off, and hear what other club members have been doing. This is always one of our most popular meetings, don't miss it!



2025

The May meeting will feature Steve Shore, WA1ZEV. Steve will be in person speaking about everything related to demystifying DMR (Digital Mobile Radio). If you're considering any type of digital radio, don't miss his presentation!



2025

2025 Field Day preparations and more. Volunteers are needed to make this Field Day a success! Plus, board elections will be held at this meeting. Please consider running for a Board of Directors position; your club needs your help!



2025

To Be Announced



2025

To Be Announced



2025

HCRA's annual auction is back at the November meeting! Ham radio gear and related accessories ONLY! Absolutely NO computers, monitors, or PC parts! Last years auction was a massive success, don't miss it this year!



2025

The HCRA Holiday Party will be held in place of the December meeting once again. Join us for a night of food, friends, and fun to be had by all. Watch for complete details and when/where you can sign up to attend.



February 2025

Hardcore or Casual?

If you pay any attention to the video game industry, you've probably heard references to two categories of players: hardcore and casual. Hardcore gamers focus on optimizing every aspect of their play, either training and competing hard to win in multiplayer online games or achieving various ideals of perfection, such as reaching 100% completion or finishing in the fastest time, in single-player games. These folks often disparage "casuals," who approach their games as fun diversions for a few hours of recreation.

Like most efforts to classify people into groups, the hardcore-versus-casual distinction breaks down in reality. Most video game players are actually somewhere on a spectrum, enjoying games mostly for fun but sometimes investing significant time in them as well.

Indeed, these "midcore" players account for the bulk of the multibillion-dollar video game industry's revenue.

Ham radio follows exactly the same pattern. Hardcore contesters and DXers make radio a central focus, dedicating much of their free time to optimizing their stations and improving their operating techniques. Casual operators may have a regular net or two they check into to shoot the breeze with friends, with a hundred watts and a wire antenna. I think the majority of us are between those extremes: doing a little more than an occasional ragchew but not building a superstation anytime soon.

Fortunately, ham radio offers fun options at any level of commitment. One of the reasons POTA has become so popular, for example, is undoubtedly its huge range of participation options. State and national parks, as well as wildlife conservation areas, game lands, and monuments, are all in the program, which means nearly everyone is within a short drive - or even a bike ride or walk - of an entity they can activate. Better still, a lot of these places can be activated from a parking lot or a nearby picnic table. You don't have to put together a super-portable station and haul it up a mountain. If your gear is at least "luggable," you can drive it to a park and operate.

In exchange for this small effort, a casual activation provides a break from usual routines, a great learning experience, and often an exciting but manageable little pileup. It's like a miniature DXpedition, shrunk to a size, cost, and timeframe almost anyone can spare. Well-known POTA blogger Thomas Witherspoon, K4SWL, refers to it as "radio therapy."

If you decide to go hardcore, though, there's plenty of room to do it. My closest POTA entities are within bicycling distance, but there are some parks around the world that require offroad vehicles, multi-day hikes, boats, or even airplanes to access. Even in Massachusetts, there are some entities that still haven't been put on the air, and activating every one of the more than 400 parks in the commonwealth would be a major project. In game design terms, POTA has a low floor, but a high ceiling: do it a little or a lot.



Continued on page 4

From the President's Desk

By Alan Dove, AB1XW

POTA isn't the only way to get a quick hit of radio fun, though. One of the many great things about this hobby is its huge assortment of similarly accessible sub-hobbies. Last month's Zero Beat included an article I wrote about my half-baked but very fun outing to try radio direction finding, or foxhunting, one weekend afternoon. If I decide to get more deeply into that, there's plenty I can do to optimize my gear and practice my technique, and even international competitions in it. Or I can just set it aside and hop back in whenever someone else hides a fox box locally.

In contesting, casual operators are actually an essential part of the game. If only the hardcore superstations entered a contest, they'd all work each other in the first hour and then have nobody else to contact. If you don't believe me, try checking into one of the big contests on a Sunday afternoon, when all the big guns are desperate for more QSOs. They'll be thrilled to hear your signal, no matter how weak.

As I write this, Winter Field Day is a week and a half away, but by the time Zero Beat comes out, it will have happened. I'm a "midcore" operator, so my own activity that weekend will depend on the state of a couple of projects around the shack and, of course, the weather. If my portable gear isn't quite working the way I want, or there's a blizzard going on, I'll just try to work the event a bit from home. How about you? Did you get out in the cold? How did it go? If you're curious about the event and want to know more, we have the best possible resource right in the club: our own Marvin Turner, W0MET, is President of the Winter Field Day Association.

We'll also start planning for June's Field Day soon. In the past, HCRA put on a distinctly hardcore event for this, with multiple portable towers, beam antennas, and full-power stations in tents. In recent years, we've scaled things back but have still managed to have a lot of fun. What will it be this year? Hardcore, casual, or something in between? That's up to you, the members. Let us know what interests you.

Alan Dove
alan.dove@gmail.com

Thank You, Thank You, Thank You!

There are not enough ways to say thank you to Alan, AB1XW, for taking my place as editor for more issues than were originally planned. Thank you for taking over as interim editor, publishing several fine issues!

The original plan was for me to get moved back into the house I grew up in after doing a rehab of the home. It was in great condition but looked like 1969! I still have more work to do, but at least now I can work at my own pace emptying boxes, building my new shack, and installing my tower.

My wife, Cecile, was scheduled for shoulder replacement surgery in January, but that got moved up to December. To make matters worse, my new neighbor's dog attacked me while I was in my own yard by pushing under the fence. The dog even attacked the officer as he made the report. Luckily I had heavy gloves on, or it would've been far worse. As it is, I was extremely sore for a few weeks afterwards.

Another unplanned event was when my back went completely out on Christmas Eve, and it is still healing, albeit very slowly, so I have to take it very easy, as just walking is a challenge. I haven't had this much pain since my back surgery in the mid-2000s! If it wasn't for bad luck... I'd have no luck!

I apologize for the small issue this month; future issues will improve in time! 73, Ken - KD1KU

2025 MTARA Hamfest



36th Annual



Amateur Radio & Electronics Hamfest

Saturday March 1st, 2025

Located

Castle of Knights

1599 Memorial Drive, Chicopee, MA 01020

www.castleofknights.com

Directions

From North:

*Take I-91 South to the Mass Turnpike. Take exit 5 (Rte. 33) off the Turnpike. Bear to the right to the first traffic light. Turn left onto Memorial Drive and travel north for about two miles.

From South:

*Take I-91 North to the Mass. Turnpike. Take exit 5 (Rte. 33) off the Turnpike. Bear to the right to the first traffic light. Turn left onto Memorial Drive and travel north for about two miles.

From East:

*Travel on the Mass. Turnpike toward West. Take exit 5 (Rte. 33) off the Turnpike. Bear to the right to the first traffic light. Turn left onto Memorial Drive and travel north for about two miles.

From West:

*Travel on Mass. Turnpike toward East. Take exit 5 (Rte. 33) off the Turnpike. Bear to the right to the first traffic light. Turn left onto Memorial Drive and travel north for about two miles.

Castle is on the right for all of the above.

Mail- in Registration Form

Name _____

Call sign _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone (cell preferred) _____

Email Address: _____

of Tables _____ x \$25.00 = _____

Is 120 VAC Needed? _____

Checks payable to: MTARA

Mail to: Brian Mullarney-N1FI, 20 Spring Street,
Easthampton, MA 01027

*** The Details ***

Doors Open:

7:30 AM Vendors only; help available for loading and unloading

8:30 AM General Admission (8:00AM if Vendors ready!)

Admission:

Adults: \$10.00

Children: under age 12 are *FREE!*

No Tailgating

Handicapped Parking Available

Snack Bar – Coffee, soda, donuts and breakfast sandwiches

Raffle Prizes – six (6) tickets for \$5.00

VE Exam -10:30 AM FREE Exams* Provided by PVVET

Candidates must pre-register for the exam prior to the Hamfest. Visit <http://pvvet.org> for registration and more information. *FCC application fees may apply
Contact: Jeff Bail (NT1K) 413-238-1992

Additional Information:

<http://www.mtara.org>

Talk-In on 146.94 (127.3 PL)

Table Registrations contact:

Brian Mullarney – N1FI
20 Spring Street
Easthampton, MA 01027
Tel. (860) 478-6790
N1FI@arrl.net

Skywarn Weather Reporting

Western MA Skywarn



One of the first things we are taught when we join a group, such as ARES, RACES, or CERT, is to never self-activate. The only exception to this is Skywarn. We had a weather event on April 1, 2023, that caused us to do just that. There was a line of severe thunderstorms heading this way from Pennsylvania and New York. Albany, NY National Weather Service (NWS) issued a warning for the Berkshires, but there was nothing from the Boston NWS except an advisory. The senior members of Skywarn were in discussions all day looking at worst-case scenarios for our area, and it ranged from just a thunderstorm to possible large hail and tornadoes.

The biggest factor was when the cold front would come through our area, before or after the sun started to go down and the heating that would fuel the worst weather would fade. When the storms came through, we had widespread and almost continuous lightning with hail up to about a half inch. This was not enough for a severe weather warning but enough for Skywarn in this area to activate and start collecting data from the field. The field being ham radio operators all around this area. We did get enough information to determine if the storms were relatively intense, and we did have hail, but it didn't progress to severe criteria. In the past the NWS has been caught with surprise intensification of storms, and the only additional data they had was from our Skywarn Spotters. The NWS has issued severe warnings due to information only we can provide by observing and reporting local conditions.

The trick is knowing when to self-activate and when to just monitor the repeaters. When there is the possibility of severe weather in this area, I am in constant contact with the leaders of Skywarn, Rob Macedo, KD1CY, being at the top of the list. Being a Skywarn Net Coordinator, I follow an invitation-only Skywarn chat group that discusses the possibilities and probabilities of what is in store for us. They interface with NWS and other agencies that Skywarn serves to get additional information and early discussions of impending watches or warnings. Sometimes they determine we should self-activate to provide that extra level of information to the NWS. If it is a longer event or at a time I am working, I contact Ez, W1AEZ, Bob, K1YO, and Rich, KC1AEO, for availability and set up a schedule for the four of us.

As a Skywarn member, you can stay aware of the weather through normal weather channels as well as the emails and social media posts Rob Macedo puts out. If it looks like there may be self-activation, you should stay aware of the weather conditions as they are happening. If it looks like the weather conditions are deteriorating to possible Skywarn criteria, you should monitor the Mt. Tom repeater, 146.940 (or whichever repeater you normally check into for Skywarn nets). On April 1st we didn't have formal nets on 146.940; we just called out about every 10 to 15 minutes for anyone with reports.

We did receive a few but can always use more. If you don't hear a net on the repeater, feel free to call out, "Is there a Skywarn Net Control on frequency?". If we are typing up a report or just monitoring the repeater, we will try to answer your call and take your report. If you get no response or the repeaters are down, you can always use the phone number or email information on the back of your Skywarn member card to post information.

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Skywarn Weather Reporting Cont'd

The one thing that is most important is to stay safe. If there is lightning close by and you have an outside antenna, shut down your station and disconnect your antenna feed. I am fortunate to have antennas in my attic due to rental restrictions and can stay on the air through just about anything. Also, you and your family come first no matter which group you are a member of. There were a high number of tornadoes in 2023. We occasionally have them here. If there is severe weather with high wind damage or tornadic activity, your number one job is to make sure you and your family are safe. After that, the safe collection and forwarding of information is a big help.

Skywarn Training

The choices for training have not been set up yet. They typically happen after winter. When they issue the schedule, I will submit it to Zero Beat.

As soon as I receive the updated training information I will post it in the very next issue of Zero Beat. -[Editor]-

SKYWARN Weather Spotter Classes 2024

Register at weather.gov/box/skywarn

SCAN ME

NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE
NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION BOSTON, MA

1 Wednesday April 10th 6-8 PM
Easton, MA – Oliver Ames High School

2 Tuesday April 30th 5:30-7:30 PM
Newport, RI – Community College of Rhode Island

3 Thursday May 2nd 5:30-7:30 PM
Windsor Locks, CT – CT Fire Academy

4 Thursday May 16th 6-8 PM
Marshfield, MA – Marshfield Maritime/Harbormaster

5 Tuesday May 21st 6-8 PM
Holden, MA – Holden Public Safety Building

6 Wednesday May 22nd 6-8 PM
Templeton, MA – Templeton Senior Community Center

Skywarn, What, When, and How to Report

After you take and pass your Skywarn class, how do you report severe weather?

The first thing you need to remember from the class is the two words, **Reportable Criteria**. Most of the time on Skywarn nets we are looking for **reportable criteria**. If you don't remember what is considered reportable criteria, you can check the back of your Skywarn I.D. card as shown below.

Sometimes we look for specific information on the net. Listen to what the net control station is requesting and respond accordingly.

If you need to make a report and there is no one running a net, you can call the number listed on your card to report in with your call sign, name, spotter I.D., and your report. Be sure it is listed on the back of the card, and you include your location.

Call 1-800-330-1147

Spotter I.D. _____

Report What, Where, and When

National Weather Service
46 Commerce Way
Norton MA 02766

1/4 1/2 3/4 1 1 1/2 2 3

Please Report these conditions:

- Tornadoes / Funnel Clouds (be wary of look-alikes)
- Wall Clouds, especially if they are rotating
- 1/8+\" Hail (BE SPECIFIC on size/diameter) (Severe = 1+\")
- Winds 40 mph or greater (Severe = 58+ mph)
- Damaging winds; Trees/Power Lines down ; Damage to Buildings
- Rainfall ... 1\" per hour ; 2+\" storm total
- ANY Flooding (Streams/Rivers, Coastal); 6+\" deep on streets
- Winter Weather Extras
 - First 2\" of snow; Every 2\"; 1+\"/hour; ALL Final Snow Totals
 - 1/3 +\" of radial ice accretion
 - Precipitation type change (rain to ice to snow)
 - Any \"Thunder-Snow\" • Any Snow Squalls

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Skywarn Weather Reporting Cont'd

Sometimes we get reports that it is raining hard and there is a lot of thunder and lightning. This is not reportable criteria and can tie up a repeater or phone number, preventing someone from reporting appropriate criteria.

Typically, if there is severe weather pending in the forecast, I am monitoring a special Skywarn chat group well before the weather arrives. The members of the group have decades of experience dealing with severe weather and access to resources that they start checking days in advance. I monitor the conversations in the group and sometimes will contact my Skywarn net control stations to see who may be available for nets. By doing this before the group is ready to request coverage on the repeaters, I can respond immediately to their request.

There have been quite a few storms lately that could develop or fade out, and sometimes we don't know until just before they get here. The group I listen to has direct contact with the Boston NWS and considers the advisories, watches, and warnings from NWS before requesting Skywarn to activate and get on the air.

Well, most of the time. As we all know, weather forecasting is not an exact science, so sometimes, we activate before a watch or warning is issued. If we get enough reports from the field, we can provide the final information the NWS needed to put out a watch or warning.

As mentioned in the beginning of this article, Skywarn is one of the few emergency groups that it's okay to self-activate. There have been many times I have been at home, enjoying dinner with my wife, while monitoring the chat group, and I just know they are going to text me. My phone beeps, and I receive: **Smitty, can you get on the 94 and call out for reports?** At that point, I can be on the air in about a minute and start requesting criteria reports on 146.940. If you are always ready, you don't need to get ready.

You don't have to be an official Skywarn Spotter to call into the nets, but you should be aware of what we are looking for when we request reportable criteria. As soon as the net is over, the other net controls and I type up a report and send it to the chat group so they can relay a summary to the Boston NWS office. The biggest thing is, to listen to what the Net Control Station is asking for and what order, we are filling out a log sheet and trying not to give a lot of extra information.

If there is a severe thunderstorm and we are asking for hail reports, we don't need to know the temperature, dewpoint, barometric pressure, and humidity. That information just ties up the net and delays us getting the report typed and sent in.

If we ask for hail reports and you have winds of 40 mph or greater with trees down, a suspected wall cloud, or a tornado, that would be good to include in your report as it is reportable criteria.

If you would like more information, go to the website: <https://wx1box.org/> and see when there are classes as well as links to other information such as more detail on reportable criteria, forecasts, and the official Boston Skywarn page: <https://www.weather.gov/box/skywarn>

Thanks to all who have signed up for Skywarn and to everyone who calls in reports to our nets.

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Skywarn Weather Reporting Cont'd

Even though we have missed the last couple of winter storms, the jet stream is moving into a position where we could receive more snow and possibly heavy snow or a Nor'easter. For winter reports we usually are interested in your station elevation as well as your reportable criteria. For most of our winter storms, your elevation will have a direct impact on how much snow or ice you will receive. The NWS is very interested in receiving that information.

So, make sure you are ready for this winter season. Keep your batteries charged and a week's worth of supplies ready. Remember, if you are always ready, you don't have to get ready.

Lastly, thank you to all the amateur radio operators who have signed up for EmComm memberships. It doesn't matter if you are CERT, MRC, Skywarn, ARES, RACES, NTS, or whatever; thank you.

73,

Smitty, KC1IKA

Skywarn net coordinator for the 146.940 (443.200) repeater

You're Reading the #1 Newsletter in New England

I haven't been able to share with all of the HCRA members the fact that Zero Beat was chosen to be the number one newsletter in all of New England by an impartial judge(s) outside of New England! Alan did a wonderful job of announcing this last September, but here are my 2 pennies worth.

The notification I received read as follows:

Dear HCRA,

Your newsletter has been chosen as the best newsletter in all of New England from the 2024 HamXposition.

For the next 12 months or until August 31st, you may use the attached graphic on your newsletter. Show it with pride! Your newsletter was chosen as the best out of 14 entries! Congratulations!



I never began the task of editing Zero Beat to build up my ego, but rather I do it for each and every HCRA member! I truly enjoy editing every issue, and only one thing could improve this... MORE input from the members as far as articles submitted for Zero Beat. You don't have to write a 10-page book or worry about spelling or punctuation. Simply write about something you enjoy, include a few photos, and send it to kd1ku@yahoo.com. 73, Ken - KD1KU -[editor]-

2025 HamXposition Call for Talks

HamXposition, now known as HamX, is the largest annual gathering of radio amateurs east of Dayton and north of Huntsville. It fields more talks and workshops than any other ham convention in the world. We're not just a trade show; we convene to exchange ideas. Here's your chance to participate.

Locally, 2025 will be celebrated as the 250th anniversary of "the shot heard 'round the world." But we all know that for over a century, amateur radio's signals have been heard 'round the world.

Every year's talks pretty much run the same gamut of subject areas: antennas and propagation, contesting and DXing, EMCOM/PS, league, operating activities, organization and innovation, technical, and training. This year we're emphasizing "signals heard 'round the world."

So, consider volunteering to speak on signals.

- How we generate and transmit amateur signals. (our bands, equipment, remote systems, antennas, propagation, etc.)
- How we modulate our signals. (CW, phone, digital, image, etc.)
- The uses we make of our signals. (on-the-air activities, EMCOM and public ser, DXing, contesting, traffic, repeaters, EME. etc.)

Even if you can't speak, you must have some ideas regarding what you or others want to hear about—elementary topics for the newcomers among us, intermediate-level topics for the general attendees, and even advanced topics to challenge and educate us all. Pass them on as a request.

Here are this year's planning and preparation milestones:

- January through April: Individuals propose presentations. The Convention's Programs Committee also solicits presentations. Speaker login webpage active.
- By 30th of April, solicited presenters reply.
- By 1st of June, potential presenters commit to speaking if scheduled.
- By 30th of June, closeout: presentation curation complete. Presenters notified.
- By 30th of June, presenters finish populating database with personal information, talk title, and talk summary. (Minor grammatical and spelling edits are permitted until the database is locked)
- 15th of July, database locked. No further editing by presenters.
- 31st of July, scheduling resolved, locked, and provided for brochure preparation.
- 10th of August, brochure submitted to printer.
- 21st thru 23rd of August - HamXposition 2025!

It's never too early to start planning! Contact HamXposition Program Chair Skip Youngberg at K1NKR@hamxposition.org.

Interested in Becoming an ARRL VE?

The Western Mass VE Team (WMVET) is looking for YOU!

ARRL is looking to the future and planning to offer all exams online by year's end, 2025.

To accomplish this goal, WMVET needs to expand our pool of examiners.

If you are over 18 years of age and hold a General Class license or higher, you can lend a hand at our monthly exam sessions. The cost is \$0.00, and the reward is seeing all the happy faces of newly minted hams. It is well worth a few hours of your time proctoring a session.

WMVET exam sessions are held monthly in Holyoke at 6 pm; most sessions take less than two hours. Becoming an ARRL VE couldn't be easier, taking but a few hours of your time and passing an open book exam. Read the information below; if you're interested, go to this link to get started:

<https://tinyurl.com/3vyjps6y>

Thanks for volunteering!

Jim, KK1W, kk1w.jim@gmail.com

Follow these three easy steps to become an ARRL Volunteer Examiner:

1. Review the Volunteer Examiner Manual, paying special attention to Chapter 2: Becoming a Volunteer Examiner. Read the information that extends and supports the published manual: Supplemental Information.
2. Complete and sign the VE Application form and open-book review.* (Interactive application and 40-question review).
3. Email, fax, or mail forms (PDF file or scanned photo image) to the address below:

ARRL VEC
225 Main St
Newington, CT 06111 USA

Fax: 860-594-0339

Email: VEC@arrl.org

Once accredited, you will receive in the mail a colorful laminated VE badge to wear at exam sessions and a certificate suitable for framing. Please allow 3-4 weeks for the ARRL VE badge and certificate to arrive.

Additional information is available on the VE Manual page and the VE Resources page.

Upgrade your Ham Radio License!



Upgrade your Ham Radio License!

The Western Mass Train and Test Group will be having a General Class License course beginning on February 18 on Zoom.

Class meets Tuesdays and Thursdays from 7-9 PM for 7 weeks.

This is a free course, but you need to purchase the ARRL General Manual for your study guide. [Link to manual below](#)

Study guide link:

<https://home.arrl.org/action/Store/Product-Details/productId/2009476073>

Email Ray Lajoie at ray.aa1se@gmail.com with questions

To register go to: <https://forms.gle/DuvE1duskwLcJK8M6>

Upgrade your license to expand your privileges to talk to the world and make friends! Learn new technologies. Great for STEM Learning! Join us! Get your General Class License now!

Zero Beat Classifieds

FOR SALE!

Kenwood TS-480SAT

Remote head comes standard. Covers 160 thru 6 meters at 100 watts. Buttons are backlit for easy night operation. Built-in antenna tuner. Rig is easy to use remotely. Beautiful Kenwood audio. Mic, power cord, manuals, and original box are included. Large, easy-to-read display.



Additional details can be found at: <https://www.kenwood.com/usa/com/amateur/ts-480sat/>

For Sale at: ~~\$550.00~~ **\$500.00**



Contact: Larry, W1AST

w1ast@arrl.net

Zero Beat Classified Submissions

If any club members have an item(s) they would like to sell, trade, or maybe something they've been searching for, they can list it right here in the Zero Beat Classified ads!

To submit an item in the classifieds, simply send an email to kd1ku@arrl.net with one or more photos of the item(s) for sale or wanted. Include a brief description, including a way to contact you (phone number and/or email), along with an asking price as well. -[Editor]-



Skywarn Spotter Essentials



Binoculars



Waterproof Flashlight



Map

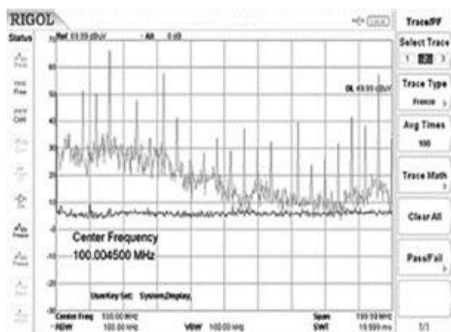


Dependable Radio



Disposable Undergarments





Need Help With RF Interference Issues ?

If you have been experiencing RF interference there is a WMA resource available that's ready to assist you. Each section has established an RF interference investigative team that can help identify and possibly remedy your problem.

To initiate your request for help you can simply send an E-mail to k1yo@arrl.net with your contact information and a description of the problem and anything you may have already tried.

A member of the WMA RFI team will contact you with directions on how to initiate the formal request for assistance. This then may require several steps / tasks on your part which provide us with essential information to guide further investigative processes.

Additionally, helpful information can be found on our [RFI Troubleshooting Guide](https://nediv.arrl.org/rfi-troubleshooting-guide/) online at:
<https://nediv.arrl.org/rfi-troubleshooting-guide/>

We are ready to help - just give us a call !!

Vy 73,
Your WMA RFI Team

Greg WA1JXR Barry W1HFN Najm AB1ZA
Bob K1YO (Team Lead)

AARC Ham Radio Flea Market



Algonquin Amateur Radio Club
Marlborough, MA



AMATEUR
RADIO

FLEA MARKET

Saturday, February 15, 2025



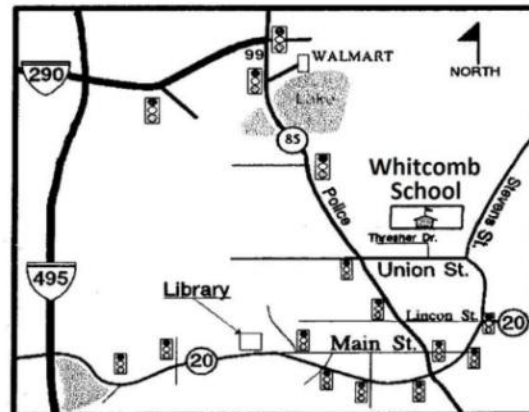
Marlborough 1Lt Charles W. Whitcomb School
(formerly Intermediate/Middle School)
25 Union St. or
off Bolton St. (Rt. 85)
Marlborough, Massachusetts

6 ft. Tables (round and rectangular)
Tables are \$25.00 each if purchased by
February 7, 2025 (\$30.00 each accepted
at the door if tables or spaces are
available, no guarantees)
Tables include vendor admission for one
person.

SETUP TIME: 6:30 AM
For more information email:
fleamarket@n1em.org

Talk In: N1EM/R 446.675 - (pl 88.5)
Updates will be on our web at:
<http://n1em.org>

Time: 9:00 AM to 12:00 Noon
General Admission: \$5.00
VEC Exams: 9:00 AM



Send This Form For Table

Reservations with Check Payable to:

AARC, PO Box 258, Marlborough, MA 01752 (\$25.00 each table due by February 7)

Name: _____ Call: _____

Address: _____ No. Tables: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Telephone: (____) _____ Amount Enclosed: \$ _____ .00

Email: _____


ARRL Club Commission Program

Renew your membership through the HCRA in 2025, and your club will get a percentage!

The HCRA will earn a **\$20 commission** for each **NEW** ARRL member we recruit and **\$5** for every **renewing member**. Download the form, fill it out completely including payment, and mail it to **Hampden County Radio Association, P.O. Box 562, Agawam, MA. 01001**

Be sure to send it to the HCRA P.O. Box above and **NOT** directly to the ARRL

<https://www.arrl.org/files/file/Membership/Club%20Commission/ARRL%20Membership%20Application>

**ARRL**
The National Association for
Amateur Radio®

Membership Application

☐ New ☐ Renew ☐ Previous Member ☐ Unlicensed

Name _____ Call Sign _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Email _____ Phone _____

Date of Birth ____ / ____ / ____

My Family Member is Joining or Renewing: (\$12 per member)

Name _____ Call Sign _____

Name _____ Call Sign _____

☐ Please note my new address ☐ I do not want my name and address made available for non-ARRL related mailings

Your Annual Membership Dues*
Circle Your Choice (rates effective Jan. 1, 2024)

	1 Year	3 Years
Standard membership	\$59	\$174
Family (same membership exp. date and address)	\$12	\$36
Student (must be under age 26)	\$30	
Blind (requires one-time statement of legal blindness)	\$12	\$36

Add-on ARRL Subscriptions

QST, ARRL's membership journal for active radio amateurs.
☐ 1 Year \$25* ☐ 3 Years \$75*

On the Air, For beginner-to-intermediate-level radio amateurs.
☐ 1 Year \$25* ☐ 3 Years \$75*

Member Benefits

Your membership supports benefits, services, and programs that keep you active and on the air.

Membership Includes:

- Access to four digital magazines and archives (QST, On the Air, QEX, & NCJ)
- Unlimited courses through the ARRL Learning Center (learn.arrl.org)
- Logbook of The World®, contests, and award programs

...and more!

*A print subscription for QST and/or On the Air requires an ARRL membership. Dues and subscription rates are subject to change without notice and are non-refundable

Payment Information

\$ _____ Total Charge to: ☐ Visa ☐ MasterCard ☐ AmEx ☐ Discover ☐ Check Enclosed

Card Number _____ Expiration Date _____

Card Holder's Signature _____

Toll Free (US) 1-888-277-5289 or 860-594-0200 • ARRL, 225 Main St., Newington, CT 06111-1400
membership@arrl.org • www.arrl.org/join



HCRA STUFF

HCRA is an ARRL Special Service Club



Next QSL Cards to be Sent to the Bureau

The next date to send your **QSL cards** to the Bureau will be on or about **April 15th**. Have your cards ready to go and make arrangements to get them to Paul, NF1G. The QSL submission form and instructions can be found at the link directly below. QSL cards can be dropped off at regular club meetings to Paul, NF1G, whose contact information is on the form link below or in the back of every Zero Beat.

To download the form go to: <https://hcra.org/files/DX%20QSL%20Submission%20Form.pdf>

HCRA 10 Meter Net

The **HCRA 10-meter net** will continue throughout the month of June each and every Monday evening at 7 pm local time on 28.375 USB +/- for QRM. Each net has a different ham radio-related topic weekly. Gary, W1JZR, is net control for this fun-filled ragchew-style net. All licensed hams are welcome to join in regardless of affiliation. Recently, with the 10m openings we've had, there have been check-ins from **Texas, New Mexico, Alaska** and many others! Give it a try; you just might like it!

Join Brown Baggers for Lunch

For the benefit of every HCRA member, **Brown Baggers** is a friendly lunch get-together that happens on the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of each month. It's held at the [Munich Haus Restaurant](#) in Chicopee Center at 12pm (noon), located on 13 Center St. Chicopee, MA, across from City Hall, or click the link above for directions. **Enjoy lunch, conversation, and camaraderie with your fellow hams!**

Membership Memorial Page

All members have the opportunity to honor club members SK's on the new memorial page on hcra.org. This can be done easily by sending the SK member's name and callsign along with any text, stories, and photos. Send them to our webmasters, Vanessa, W1IRL, or Alan, AB1XW at the email address's below:

Vanessa, W1IRL, at webmaster@hcra.org or **Alan, AB1XW**, at alan.dove@gmail.com

Please check-out the HCRA You Tube Channel and while you're there don't forget to click subscribe!
I hope that many members are working on their short video's for the club's You Tube channel.
For more info see the April issue of Zero Beat. The YouTube Channel link is below.

For Sale Items

There's a classified ad section that is for HCRA members. Members who have a need, something to sell, or even a trade.

Send item description and photo(s) to:
kd1ku@arri.net

HCRA Social Media Links

Groups.io: <https://groups.io/g/hcra>

You Tube: <https://www.youtube.com/HampdenCountyRA>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/HampdenCountyRA>

Clublog update: Clublog can be accessed at <https://clublog.org/league.php> Signup is free, and there are a number of ways to look up information. Give it a try; who knows... you just might like it!

This is the latest HCRA Clublog for 2025; you can see who has been on the air hot and heavy so far!

HCRA Clublog information was last updated on February 1st 2025

NOTICE: This Clublog page is the first of several for 2025

The March issue will feature the final results of the 2024 HCRA Clublog League



<input checked="" type="radio"/> No Mode Filter	<input type="radio"/> CW	<input type="radio"/> Phone	<input type="radio"/> Data
<input checked="" type="radio"/> Rank by DXCCs	<input type="radio"/> Rank by slots	Rank by band: Totals ▼	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 160M <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 80M <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 60M <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 40M <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 30M <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 20M <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 17M <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 15M <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 12M <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 10M <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 6M			
<input checked="" type="radio"/> Current entities	<input type="radio"/> Current and deleted	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Worked	<input type="radio"/> Confirmed
<input type="radio"/> No Date Filter	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 2025	<input type="radio"/> 2024	<input type="radio"/> Last 12 months
Filter by club/continent:		HCRA - Hampden County Radio Association ▼	

Rank	Callsign	160	80	60	40	30	20	17	15	12	10	6	DXCC ▼	Slots	Range
1	NF1G	2	8	0	13	42	38	4	38	65	66	0	149	276	41 yrs
2	KX1X	0	29	0	65	40	70	37	73	53	85	1	147	453	28 yrs
3	W1RM+1	13	20	0	44	24	56	8	40	31	65	1	120	302	62 yrs
4	W1AST+1	1	14	0	20	9	18	25	12	18	33	1	69	151	16 yrs
5	K1NZ+2 ★	1	4	26	3	45	5	4	9	32	28	0	67	157	14 yrs
6	KK1W+1	3	4	0	10	11	14	9	6	2	10	4	62	73	49 yrs
7	N1FTP ★	0	0	0	14	9	22	12	30	28	36	0	54	151	17 yrs
8	N1JIE	0	3	0	10	10	17	14	16	19	22	2	39	113	8 yrs
9	WB1DX+2	0	0	0	3	4	12	2	6	6	14	0	32	47	38 yrs
10	WD1S+2	0	1	0	8	4	15	0	1	0	15	0	31	44	13 yrs
11	NX1K	1	3	0	8	5	10	14	9	9	14	0	26	73	36 yrs
12	W1JA+1	1	2	1	1	8	0	0	0	15	1	0	24	29	56 yrs
13	NE1C	2	4	0	10	0	8	0	11	0	16	0	21	51	23 yrs
14	K1VOI	1	0	0	1	2	4	0	0	0	3	1	7	12	24 yrs
15	WY1G	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	5	6	44 yrs

Do you know what Clublog is and what it can do for you?

If you have never used Clublog, need a refresher, or simply have the desire to learn as much as possible about Clublog, go to the [HCRA YouTube Channel](#) and learn all about it.

All meetings are recorded and posted on hcra.org plus video links are listed in Zero Beat. The link to the April 2021 meeting where Clublog was the topic of our guest speaker is listed below.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qj2lKcQRNbE&t=1s>

Local Nets

Sundays: 8:45 am Western MA. VHF Emergency Net on 146.94, PL 127.3 W1TOM/R

Sundays: 9:15 am Western MA. UHF Emergency Net on 443.200, PL 127.3 W1TOM/R

1st Monday of the month: 6:45 pm, MEMA RACES Drill, 146.490 simplex and 3.930 LSB.

Mondays: 7 pm, RACES Drill, 146.910, Mt. Greylock.

Mondays: 7 pm, HCRA 10 Meter Net on 28.375, new topic every week. Net control is Gary, W1JZR

Tuesdays: 7:30 pm, 146.94, PL 127.3 - Hampshire County Emergency Net

Tuesdays: 8 pm, ARES Emergency Net, on 146.985, PL 136.5

Wednesdays: 7:30 pm, MTARA Info Net on 146.94, PL 127.3

Wednesdays: MTARA Swap net: 146.94, following the Info net

Wednesdays: N1RLX Simplex Net, Check-in on 146.94 then QSY to 146.550 simplex immediately following the swap net

Wednesdays: 9 am, FCARC Experimental Net, 28.354 MHz

Thursdays: 8 pm, FCARC Information Net, 146.985 - 136.5

Join or Renew Your ARRL Membership!

ARRL members enjoy:

- QST Magazine
 - Members-Only Web Services
 - Technical Information Service
 - Member Discounts
 - Outgoing QSL Service
 - Continuing Education
 - ARRL as an Advocate
 - Regulatory Information Branch
 - Public Relations for Amateur Radio
 - ARRL Field Organization
 - ARRL-sponsored contests
 - Operating Awards
 - Amateur Radio Emergency Service
 - Hamfests and Conventions
 - Volunteer Examiner Coordinator Program
- <http://www.arrl.org/membership>



Club Meetings and VE Sessions

1st Friday of the month: HCRA meetings are held every month, with the exception of July and August. Doors open at 7 pm, followed by the meeting at 7:30 pm sharp. For complete details checkout <http://www.hcra.org>

2nd Monday of the month: FCARC meeting at 7 pm. 1 Aviation Way, Turners Falls, MA. (airport). Social Hour 6-7 pm, meeting at 7 pm. <http://www.fcarc.org>

2nd Saturday of the month: (prior to FCARC meeting) at 8 am breakfast at Denny's Pantry, 496 Bernardston Rd. Greenfield, MA. Brad Councilman bc@councilman.com

3rd Friday of the month: MTARA Meeting, 7 pm, Castle Of Knights, 1599 Memorial Drive, Chicopee, MA, 01020 <https://mtara.org/>

4th Friday of the month: The Western Mass VE Team (WMVET) VE sessions at the Holyoke Hospital Auxiliary Room beginning every 4th Friday at 6pm to perform VE exams. E-mail Jim, KK1W, kk1w.jim@gmail.com. Call or text 413-237-4666. Need directions? <http://www.hcra.org/meeting-location/>

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alan.dove@gmail.com

Vice-President - Ez Moralez, W1AEZ

ez.w1aez@gmail.com

Treasurer - Michael Kotarba, KB1WAM

kfmfish@hotmail.com

Secretary - Paul Kelliher, NF1G

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**Here is your fabulous next
issue of Zero Beat!**

Our 77th Year as an ARRL Affiliated Club

**Hampden County Radio Association
P.O. Box 562
Agawam, MA 01030-0562**